

TENNESSEE FOLKLORE SOCIETY
BULLETIN

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Tennessee Wesleyan College
Athens, Tennessee

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Volume XVII

March, 1951

Number 1

THE PARTIAL UNMAKING OF AN IGNORAMUS

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To come before an organization devoted to the accumulation, preservation and dissemination of knowledge with a discussion of ignorance seems at the outset the height of presuming on your good nature. Ignorance here, however, is in the same category as sin at a protracted meeting. I am under conviction of it and want to testify to my desire for redemption. My remarks will be brief, for the worth of a testimony is in its sincerity, not its length. If there is a word in the title above which justifies my being here, it is the word "unmaking." Ignorant I came into this world; ignorant I would have left it but for the merest chance. Ignorant concerning folk music, that is.

I grew up in a family dedicated to the proposition that a child should not mature music-less. In the second grade, therefore, I started piano lessons. In the sixth I took up the violin — not the fiddle. As a high school senior I began voice work, continuing my violin. Glee club, male quartet and concert orchestra filled my spare college hours. I once played the "Meditation" from Thais at a Mother's Day program. I sang occasionally in church and on radio programs. I even acquired an A. B. degree. But still I basked in blissful ignorance of the most entertaining, the most compelling music there is. And I should not have. Oh, in church camps during the summer months we used to sing "Down at the Station," "Walking at Night" and "The Silver Moon Is Shining," but I thought they were just nice little songs. Nobody told me that they were folk songs and as such worthy of close attention.

My father grew up as a Kentucky country boy among people who

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played and sang genuine folk music. His father was a good fiddler, I am told, but I could never get very much excited over his talents as I studied the violin. Recently I was forcibly reminded that he was a part of a tradition, not just an individual, when I ran across the tune, "Where'd You Git Yo Whiskey" in Botkin's Treasury of Southern Folklore. This song was recorded by Herbert Halpert as a duet played by the fiddler and another person who tapped on the strings with two straws. Reading this account, I recalled a story about my grandfather and his fiddle which I had grown up on.

Grandpa Grise was sitting one winter evening in the chimney corner sawing out "Soldier's Joy" while his brother-in-law tapped lightly and rhythmically with two small sticks on the strings high up on the neck-piece. They heard a noise outside. Grandfather stopped. No noise. He and Uncle Will started their duet again and the noise recurred, but stopped again with them. Getting up from their chairs, the two Kentucky hill farmers walked slowly out of the room and into the back yard, Grandfather playing "Soldier's Joy" and Uncle Will tapping. Too late the culprit trying to break into the log smokehouse saw he had been tricked and trapped.

Although my father had learned to fiddle some before I came along, a finger injury stopped his playing, and consequently, he passed down to me none of his father's traditional tunes. I continued as a mediocre violinist when I should have been a good fiddler. I bought just yesterday a book of fiddle tunes which I shall learn, the Lord and my arthritis willing.

An uncle lived with us when I was a small boy and every Saturday night we sat before the big bell-like horn of his battery-powered Philco to listen to the Solemn Old Judge, Deford Bailey, Uncle

Dave Macon, Humphery Bate and the rest make the Grand Ol' Opry nationally famous with a good deal of real folk music. Once in a while my father telegraphed in a request, and then we sat up till all hours waiting to hear the telegram read and the song sung or played. I remember one night we asked for "The Little Old Log Cabin in the Lane." All I knew was that it was an old song these men had grown up on and not good music. The fact that I have more recently found out that Will S. Hays, the creator of "Mollie Darling," wrote it does not keep me from calling it folk music.

Until three or four years ago my life was filled with what the military communiques call near misses. I should have become saturated with the folk music tradition before I left home, but somehow it was looked down upon a little and thought less important than art songs and finger exercises. My ignorance after school teaching a while and later entering the army was no less lamentable

I should have caught on in the army. In fact, I should have learned and written down many strictly army folk songs which decorum makes unsingable elsewhere, but I didn't. I had not come to realize their value. I did notice this — the boys I knew from north of the Mason-Dixon line seldom sang. They might whistle shrilly and jazzily, but they seldom sang or hummed to themselves, while many times I heard boys from the South and Southwest singing softly to themselves as they shined their shoes or swept the barracks or cleaned a dirty gun. (These tuens had gapped scales and were modal, they tell me now.) It seemed at the time that the men were getting some sort of contentment and joy out of tunes and words which in themselves were melancholy and moody. But I left the army without even knowing the first verse to "Lili Marlene."

Graduate school at Peabody College may be called the protracted meeting at which I was converted. Along with much duller matters I pursued an interest here in matters regional which I had recently developed, and under the tutelage of Miss Susan B. Riley, particularly, I soon came face to face with folk music in books. My reading cards for her soon showed Child and Sharp and Lomax and Jackson. My concert-going soon included Charles Bryan, J. J. Niles and Tom Scott. My record listening broadened to include Susan Reed, Niles and Burl Ives. On the radio I became conscious of the difference between Bradley Kincaid and Hank Williams, and I said, "Where have I been all my life?" One day I knew Miss Riley was going to discuss "Barbara Allen"—so I got a book from the library and learned the ballad. I got Niles' record and played it. And then she asked someone else in class how the song went! That person couldn't get started so I started it off, my first public performance of a folk song, sans permission. Later "Lord Randal" came up for discussion and I worked hard to get that ready, but Miss Riley unwittingly disappointed me and had the class recite it chorally instead.

All this time, I had continued my voice work at Peabody, though as I began to get interested in singing folk songs, I could not help being a little intimidated by the experts. In Tennessee, there was Mr. Bryan who had spent years in collecting and in singing the genuine ballads to traditional dulcimer accompaniment and who could tell tales of their history and collection. When I went back to Kentucky, I heard Niles and marvelled at his years of research and ballad-collecting and dulcimer-making. I still played only the violin. I had never been to a cabin on a mountainside where the

children spoke "pure" Anglo-Saxon (whatever that is) and ran around in blond nakedness and the mother knew forty-nine verses to "Froggie Went a-Courtin"! For a good while it seemed to me that only these experts qualified for permission to perform folk songs.

Maybe, says I to me, if I learn to play the dulcimer, I, too, will qualify in a way. Mr. Bryan says to me, all right — if you have a couple of years with nothing else to do. Otherwise, try something different. And he suggested this "thing" I have here — the Autoharp. This instrument was developed in the 1880's by C. F. Zimmerman and was called the Zimmerman Autoharp. During the '90's, I am told, there were Autoharp clubs and it was used both as a solo instrument and for accompaniment, though it is only fitted for the latter. The makers say that some of today's folk songs were first sung to it. During World War II it was rejuvenated as an instrument for use in army hospitals. The Gray Ladies of the Red Cross promoted its use. The National Foundation of Musical Therapy has found the Autoharp useful in its work. A description in the New York Sun of the music therapy work of the National Federation of Music Clubs says that "The Autoharp ... is particularly good because its soft, sweet notes often start the most sullen patients to humming." Missionaries have found it handy and I am told social workers in the mountains have nicknamed it the "Mountain Piano." It is particularly useful for teachers in the elementary grades and in localities which cannot afford pianos or where the teacher is not a qualified pianist. Webster carries the word "autoharp" with a small letter, just like dulcimer and fiddle.

For me it is an ideal accompanying instrument because it is easy to carry, fairly flexible and easy to play. The fact that it may not be thoroughly traditional concerns me hardly at all. I believe it to be in the folk tradition to change technique to suit changed needs and circumstances. Otherwise we'd still be making lyres from tortoise shells as legend says Mercury made the first one. After I learned to play a few chords and to sing to the Autoharp, it was not long before I more or less accidentally performed before a women's club and was amazed at the response. Not an expert on an instrument, not a collector of songs, not sure how the songs should be sung, I yet derive untold pleasure from singing folk songs for myself and for others, and slowly I am building up a repertoire and am having more fun with music than I ever did before.

I am still woefully ignorant, but I believe my ignorance is ameliorating. I shall never be a folk song expert. I am too much interested in the whole field of folklore and American culture to spend the time to achieve that distinction. I can become a sort of typhoid carrier of folk song enthusiasm and perhaps teach a few here and there a new song or remind them of an old one they have forgotten.

There are not enough folk song "experts" — bless them — to go around. They alone cannot do the job of dissemination this delightful music. And I do not believe they are entitled to a corner on the fun of singing these old songs, anyway.

I once lived in the sin of ignorance. After a long time, to use the words of a new song, I saw the light, and though I may not yet be acceptable as a member of the congregation, I want to testify

as one repentant and one whose heart has been cleansed somewhat of its one dark blot. What I have done anyone can do; that's the glorious thing about this sort of religion — there are no elect.

SHAPING CONTROLS OF BALLAD TUNES OVER THEIR TEXTS

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Probably most of the British-American ballads originated text first, followed by the composition of a melody to fit by the same or another hand, or text-tune simultaneously in a unified process of composition. On the other hand, some ballad texts show signs of having been devised with an already existing popular melody of some integrity in mind, in which case obviously the music would have exerted a control over textual form and other characteristics from the beginning. In either case, through the vagaries of oral transmission we can trace musical influences on ballad poetry which are the subject of this paper.

Regardless of which element is first, after operation of mutual influence in oral tradition the poem and air of a folksong are a unified phenomenon structurally and rhythmically.

In folk song, poetry and music - text and melody - form a unit which may be separated into its constituent aspects when minute study requires it, but which nevertheless should always be looked upon and ultimately treated as an organic unit.....The unity of folk music and poetry is not only plausible theory, but also observable reality.¹

Scholars are becoming more and more aware of the need for musical analysis of this evident oneness.

Many students of the field think that whatever important advances are made in the future in ballad criticism and folksong theory will result from taking the already extensive body of information gained from the critical study of texts and incorporating with it the results of careful investigation of the creative and re-creative effect of music upon the folksong tradition.²

That tunes have taken no passive role in balladry, especially in matters of rhythm, is unquestionable. "It is a nice question which of the two elements, music or language, has played the more influential part in moulding the ballad into its special and characteristic form."³

Melodies may be dichotomized into strong and weak types, those which sturdily resist loss of individual identity and those which are more liable to adaptation to the unique needs of a specific ballad text. As only one example of each, the strong mixolydian tune often found with "Lord Thomas and Fair Annet" ("The Brown Girl," Child 73)⁴ usually in compound triple meter also is sung with

1. George Herzog, "Musical Typology in Folksong." Southern Folklore Quarterly, I (June, 1937), 49.

2. Reed Smith, in the article on "Folk Music." The International Encyclopedia of Music and Musicians, ed. Oscar Thompson (New York: Dodd-Mead, 1946), p. 586.

3. J.W. Hendren, A Study of Ballad Rhythm. No. 14 in Princeton Studies in English (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1936), p. 25.

4. See Vance Randolph, Ozark Folksongs (Columbia: State Historical Society of Missouri, 1946), Volume I, p. 94 (No. 15A), and Cecil J. Sharp, English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians (London: Oxford University Press, 1932), Volume I, pp. 119, 120, 125, 127, 129, and 130 (19 E, F, H, P, T, U, Aa, Cc, Dd, and Ee).

"Edward" (Child 13) in 4/4,⁵ with "Lord Lovel" (Child 75),⁶ with "Lady Isabel and the Elf-Knight" (Child 4) in duple meter,⁷ with "Earl Brand" (Child 7) in duple,⁸ with "Fair Margaret and Sweet William" (Child 74) in 6/8,⁹ and with the "Bamboo Briers" in triple meter;¹⁰ the weak tune to "The False Knight Upon the Road" (Child 3)¹¹ could hardly be sung with any other ballad and can scarcely be conceived to have any noticeable influence over its text.

Of strong melodies Sharp says, "Many of the ballad tunes make really beautiful music and are fully capable of standing alone, divorced from their texts, and of being played or sung as absolute music"; of weak tunes, "The most perfect type of ballad, however, is that in which the tune, whilst serving its purpose as an ideal vehicle for the words, is of comparatively little value when divorced from its text."¹² Strong melodies, which seem to outnumber the weak, are they that wield certain controls over their texts. The ensuing discussion takes up these controls under the topics tone upon syllable, musical phrase upon verse of poetry, musical period upon stanzaic structure, and considerations of refrains.

The English language is probably fortunate in that the meaning of its words¹³ is not so subject to the pitch upon which they are intoned as is the case in certain tongues. However, each vowel sound does possess a characteristic pitch, and good tune-text fit in balladry depends to some extent upon a correlation between syllabic and musical pitch. With the aid chiefly of Kenyon's American Pronunciation¹⁴ it is possible to arrange the English stressed vowels in the order of their pitch beginning with the highest:

| | Phonetic Symbol | Diacritical Mark | Sample Word |
|-----|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 1. | i | ī | bect |
| 2. | ɪ | ȳ | bit |
| 3. | e | ē | bait |
| 4. | ɛ | ē | bet |
| 5. | æ | æ | bat |
| 6. | ʌ | æ (r) | fur-ther |
| 7. | ʌ | ū | a-bove |
| 8. | ɑ | ā | fa-ther |
| 9. | ɔ | ō | law |
| 10. | o | o | coat |
| 11. | ʊ | oo | pull |
| 12. | u | oo | pool ¹⁵ |

If the verbal and musical pitch of accented and long tones through the course of a ballad are compared, there will be found to exist a small positive correla-

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5. Sharp, op. cit., p. 53 (8J).
 6. L.L. McDowell, Memory Melodies (Ann Arbor: Edwards, 1947), p. 8.
 7. John Harrington Cox, Folksongs of the South (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1925), No. 1B, and Sharp, op. cit., p. 9 (3E).
 8. Randolph, op. cit., p. 48 (No. 3).
 9. Ibid., p. 112 (16C).
 10. Ibid., p. 381 (100A; "The Jealous Brothers").
 11. Sharp, op. cit., p. 3 (2A).
 12. Ibid., p. xxix.
 13. See George Herzog, "Speech Melody and Primitive Music." Musical Quarterly, XX (Oct., 1934), 453.
 14. John S. Kenyon, American Pronunciation (Ann Arbor: Wahr, 1943). Ninth ed. See especially pp. 24 and 66. Any error in the application of his data is mine.
 15. Because they do not fit readily into this schedule, diphthongs are omitted.

tion. The following illustration will indicate that melody is responsible for a portion of that similarity. For it the corresponding stanza of nine variants of the same ballad, "Fair Margaret and Sweet William" (Child 74), accompanied by nine different rather strong tunes, was chosen.¹⁶ The reasoning is thus: a folk-singer subconsciously recasts the wording of his text; why should not one of the impulses toward recasting be esthetic adjustment of syllabic pitch with the sequence of tonal pitch of the melody being employed? For example, given a musical third phrase closing on a low progression, would he not be more likely to word the third line of his text "Pray tell to me this long, long love," which terminates in three vowels of low pitch,¹⁷ than "Come tell with me the long courtship," which closes on a high, short syllable?¹⁸

For a just sampling of stressed pitches in the nine variants, comparison of the following six points appears in the table below: the first and last accents in line one, and all four accents in line three.

| Phone Involved | POETRY | | MUSIC | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| | Syllable | Number of Occurrences | On High Pitch | On Medium Pitch | On Low Pitch |
| i | me | 7 | 1 | 4 | 2 (?) |
| I | { morn-ing court-ship | 4 | | 4 | |
| | | 1 | | 1 | |
| e | { may pray they | 4 | | 3 | 1 |
| | | 1 | | 1 | |
| | | 1 | | 1 | |
| E | tell mer-ry | 9 | 3 | 6 | |
| | | 2 | | 2 | |
| 2 | last | 1 | | | 1 |
| 3 | ear-ly | 2 | 1 | 1 | |
| A | love | 8 | | 6 | 2 |
| a | | (none) | | | |
| o | { long morn-ing | 9 | 2 (?) | 3 | 4 |
| | | 5 | | 3 | 2 |
| o | | | | | |
| u | | (none) | | | |
| u | | | | | |
| | | 54 | 7 | 35 | 12 |

16. From Sharp, *op. cit.*, No. 20 D, K, L, O, and P; Arthur Kyle Davis, *Traditional Ballads of Virginia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1929), No. 19G; Josephine McGill, *Folk-Songs of the Kentucky Mountains* (New York: Boosey, 1917), p. 71; Dorothy Scarborough, *A Song-Catcher in Southern Mountains* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1937), p. 390; and Loraine Wyman and Howard Brockway, *Lonesome Tunes* (New York: Gray, 1916), p. 94.

17. Sharp, *op. cit.*, No. 20 O.

18. Davis, *op. cit.*, No. 19 G.

Correlation between pitch of syllables and pitch of tones as demonstrated by the above table is small but incontrovertible. Of thirty-one high syllables, five are on high pitch, three on low, and the rest medium; of twenty-three low syllables, two are on high and eight on low pitch. No reason for two occurrences of the highest verbal pitch of all taking place on low pitch is apparent, but partial explanations of the two high pitches on long are that one is only high medium and the other is on a flatted seventh immediately following a high tonic, a situation that implies lowness.¹⁹

The fascinating subject of ornamentation (use of grace notes, appoggiaturas, pickups, "gooses," "feathering," snaps and twists of the voice on a syllable) is in part a function of tune control over text. Whereas the nature of the syllable wields an influence over the employment, for example, of a trailing harmonic upward twist, its type of note (long) and location in the melody (internally in a line), is more determinative. In each stanza of "The Wife of Usher's Well" (Child 79)²⁰ there are nine long notes, of which five are internal. Stanza one is reproduced herewith, with syllables that occur on long notes underlined:

There was a la-dy, and a la-dy gay,
Of children she had three;
She sent them away to the north college school
To learn their gram-ma-rie.

Following upward ornaments often take place on the five internal long syllables but seldom on terminal long notes or any of the syllables on short notes. Of the forty long internal notes in this eight-stanza ballad, twenty-five have ornaments; only two other notes have them, both long, both at the end of a line two.

Next is a horizontal rather than vertical control - the necessity of inserting extra syllables into the text in order to provide each insistent note in the melody with a syllable and conversely that of omitting syllables from the text when the tune is unable to accommodate them. Sharp refers to the first practice, "The folksinger.....but rarely sings more than one note to a single syllable. Indeed, rather than break this rule, he will often interpolate a syllable of his own," and gives as examples Edelin for Ellen, smodelkin for smoking, and cadelico for calico.²¹ Jackson's illustration is, "The following lines

Ho-san-na is ring-ing, I'm hap-py while sing-ing
A-shout-ing the prai-ses of Je-su-ses name

show how the trick was turned and the text was stretched to make it fit the procrustean bed of the lively instrumental tune."²² Among the Negroes especially insertion of the enclitic a, as in a-shout-ing, is common.

When a strong five-phrase tune compels repetition of the fourth line of a common ballad stanza, the fourth phrase of music is generally too long properly to fill the short (six-syllable, three-accent) fourth line of verse. This situation leads to repetition of two syllables at the end of line four, a solution al-

19. An additional fact is, the only anacrusis on Young (jan) instead of Sweet (swit) is on the lowest note of all anacruses.

20. Sung to the writer by Mrs. Myrtle Carrigan, Nashville, Tenn., October 14, 1949, under the title "The Lady Gay" or "Three Little Babes."

21. Cecil J. Sharp, English Folk-Song: Some Conclusions (London: Simkin, 1907), p. 109.

22. George Pullen Jackson, White Spirituals in the Southern Uplands (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1933), p. 165.

most universal for example in "Lord Lovel" (Child 75):

Lord Lovel he stood at his castle gate,
Combing his milk-white steed,
When up came Lady Nancy Belle,
To wish her lover good speed, good speed,
To wish her lover good speed.²³

Since exact repetition is anathema to the folk, it is necessary that the melody change in pitch, usually rising, on the repeated syllables.

On the other hand, lack of provision in the tune for as many words as the meaning of a text would seem to suggest causes omission. In the American ballad "John Henry," for instance, the music and especially the sharp hammer-blow rhythm regularly repeated is of great importance. For this reason it is not surprising to find texts that are a series of acephalous incomplete sentences, constrained to be so by the rhythm of poetry and melody. Following are two stanzas that exhibit syllabic subservience to their accompaniment:

People cried out, heard John Henry's death,
Couldn't hardly say, "Him dead."
Yesterday morning on the east-bound train
Came news John Henry's dead.

John Henry hammered on the mountain
Till the hammer caught on fire.
The last words I heard him say,
"Cool drink of water 'fore I die."²⁴

The fact that a strong five-phrase melody does require provision of a fifth line of text, nearly always the fourth line repeated, is a function of tune control over verse. It occurs rather predominantly in several common ballads: Child 4, 13, 68, 73, 75, 78, and 155; "Jack Monroe," "Frankie and Albert," and "John Henry." The strong tunes, manifestly incomplete at the end of phrase four, are impelled by some sort of momentum into a perorating fifth phrase,²⁵ which entails addition of a fifth line of verse. A similar impulsion is the repetition of half the third line, exemplified in some variants of "Lord Randal" (Child 12).²⁶

Repetition of the fourth line in each stanza is not properly a refrain. Approaching the status of a one-syllable refrain is the tune-determined attachment of the meaningless syllable O at the end usually of a feminine trimeter line. Although "The Gypsy Laddie" (Child 200) ordinarily appears in feminine ballad stanza, some variants use "the refrain syllable O added to the second and fourth verses, apparently for the purpose of suiting the stanza to the music.....It is evident that the rhythm of the tune requires the addition of the refrain syllable."²⁷

23. Davis, op. cit., p. 574 (No. 20E).

24. Sung to the writer by Thomas F. Staton, Nashville, Tenn., May 27, 1949.

25. One reason is the termination of phrase four on the third, or other degree, of the scale instead of the fundamental, as in "Lord Lovel" (Davis, op. cit., No. 20E).

26. Cecil J. Sharp, One Hundred English Folk-Songs (London: Oliver Ditson, 1916), p. 44 (No. 18).

27. Hendren, op. cit., pp. 85, 86.

There were three gypsies that came to my door
And downstairs ran this lady O!
One sang high and the other sang low
And the other Boceny, Boceny Biscay O!²⁸

The syllables can be appended not only to feminine lines but also in a common ballad stanza. This is "Get Up and Bar the Door" (Child 275):

It was about the Martinmas time
An' a gay time it was then, O,
For our guid wife had puddins to make
An' she biled them in the pan, O.²⁹

There is little question that the music causes addition of the O's.

With respect to poetic prosody or how a text is read, the music irresistibly imposes its rhythm upon the text. It regularizes the group repetition pattern from stanza to stanza and it orders the poetic meter of the verse. For example, without its music "The Wife of Usher's Well" would hardly accord some syllables such length as appears in the copy a few pages above. In short, the sung ballad text is of quantitative scansion, as much so as Latin and Greek ever were and far more varied, for, even apart from considerations of pitch, classical prosody knew only two time lengths. "Classical Greek and Latin poetry used a time scheme depending on whether the vowel of a syllable was long or short. Since a long vowel occupied twice the time of a short one, all classical meters fall into patterns which can be represented by quarter and eighth notes."³⁰ Although from Anglo-Saxon days English verse has been accentual, song texts are of a kind of super-quantitativeness.

Syllabic emphasis by length, then, takes its place alongside primary and secondary measure position in musical prosody. Often the accompaniment, especially among the Negroes,³¹ is able to transmute a quite unmetrical, prosaic verse into successful rhythm. The last line of "Pretty nancy of Yarmouth,"³² "Says, 'Lor'! If I don't get him I'll die for his sake," is a good example. Two lines from Smith's "The Maid Freed from the Gallows" (Child 95)³³ illustrate distinct musical change of accentuation:

"Fey-ther, fey-ther, ha yo brot me goold?
Ha yo paid my fee?"

The above is how the poetic scansion would seem to be; below is how its melody

28. Scarborough, op. cit., pp. 411-412.

29. Edwin C. Kirkland, "Collecting Folksongs from College Students." Southern Folklore Quarterly, XIII (Dec., 1949), 170.

30. Calvin S. Brown, Music and Literature (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1948), p. 17.

31. See Henry E. Krehbiel, Afro-American Folksongs (New York: Schirmer, 1914), pp. 97, 99.

32. Cecil J. Sharp, English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians, p. 379 (No. 63).

33. Reed Smith, South Carolina Ballads (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1928), p. 81. Quoted in Hendren, op. cit., p. 46.

causes it to be performed:

/"Fey-ther, fey-ther, ha yo brot me
Goold? Ha yo paid my fee?"

Conversely, poor fit by the tune of the text often results in wrenched accents, "instances of accentuation which are at variance with the natural stresses of language."³⁴ Two examples, of which the second is extreme, follow:³⁵

/"Bold Ar-der went forth one sum-mer morn-ing.

/"Then the boy bent his breast and he swam to the ship's side.

Rather than considering reversal of stress in a bisyllabic word a thorough blemish on satisfactory poetry-music relations, accepting it as a quaint and charming alteration of pronunciation is probably better. Why should not the fictional world of balladry be conceded some attractive liberties with the language?

If inferior oral tradition causes ballad poetry to suffer, discriminating folk-singers will just as surely improve it. The accompaniment of a superior tune or the substitution of such a tune for one of less quality seems to play a part in the process of betterment. Following is the beginning of "The Sheffield Apprentice" collected in Surrey, England:

/"I was brought up in Shef-field, but not of high de-gree,
My par-ents dot-ed on me, hav-ing no child but me."³⁶

Its fit to its undistinguished melody is not remarkable. But after a trip across the Atlantic and the lapse of fifty years the following variant, to a much better tune, shows how simple changes in syntax can accomplish much poetic improvement:

/"In Shef-field I was brought up, not of a high de-gree.
My par-ents dot-ed on me; they had no child but me."³⁷

Ballad texts that were originally devised to fit existing strong tunes naturally are structurally controlled by those tunes. Repetition of stanzaic material and insertion of refrains are introduced to eke out necessary content. For a melody containing five short phrases, the fourth line of a ballad stanza would be repeated as in "Lord Lovel" above. A melody containing two long phrases (AB) instead of four short would suggest that the poem should be considered in long-line couplets, like "The Sheffield Apprentice" immediately above, instead of short-line quatrains (common-meter ballad stanzas) like "The Wife of Usher's Well" and "John Henry." Anapestic tetrameter couplets are also found to compound biphrasal tunes. For a melody containing three long (ABC) or six short musical phrases, the third and fourth lines of ballad stanza might both be repeated, as in "Fair Margaret and Sweet William" (Child 74):

34. Hendren, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

35. *Ibid.*, pp. 128, 137.

36. *The Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, I (1899-1904), 200.

37. Sung to the writer by Albert Williams, Nashville, Tenn., December 5, 1949.

Sweet William he arose one merry morning
And he trimmed himself in blue.
"Pray tell unto me of your long, long love
O Betwixt Lady Margret and you,
Pray tell unto me of your long, long love
O Betwixt Lady Margret and you."³⁸

A longer melody, of four long phrases, requires linking of two ballad stanzas or of two anapestic tetrameter couplets to make one stanza, as in "The Boston Burglar":

Ah! I was born in Boston, a city you all know well:
Brought up by honest parents, the truth to you I will tell,
Brought up by honest parents, and raised most tenderly.
Till I became a sporting man at the age of twenty-three.³⁹

When an iambic tetrameter couplet is to be sung to a four-phrase tune, two lines of refrain are called for. Together with tune structure, "dance has probably contributed to the British ballad such rhythmic elements as the refrain."⁴⁰ A line of refrain may follow each line of text to result in a common ballad stanza, as in "The Cruel Brother" (Child 11):

There's three fair maids went out to play at ball,
I-o the lily gay,
There's three landlords come court them all,
And the rose smells so sweet I know.⁴¹

Or a feminine ballad stanza, as in "The Cruel Mother" (Child 20):

There was a lady in New York,
All along little O-my,
She fell in love with her father's clerk,
All down by the greenwood sidey.⁴²

Or an iambic tetrameter stanza, same ballad:

There was a young lady so fair,
Down in the loney, oney, O,
She was courted by the King's son so great,
Down by the greenwood sideys, O.⁴³

Or an anapaestic tetrameter stanza, as in "The Elfin Knight" (Child 2):

Go tell him to clear me one acre of ground,
Setherwood, sale, rosemary and thyme,

³⁸. Cecil J. Sharp, English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians, p. 143 (No. 20K). I cannot imagine why Sharp or Miss Maud Karpeles capitalized Betwixt, unless they conceived the O as a refrain syllable at the end of lines three and five.

³⁹. Scarborough, *op. cit.*, p. 433.

⁴⁰. Evelyn Kendrick Wells, The Ballad Tree (New York: Ronald, 1950), p. 4.

⁴¹. Sharp, English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians, p. 36 (No. 6A).

⁴². *Ibid.*, p. 60 (No. 10H).

⁴³. *Ibid.*, p. 59 (No. 10G).

Betwixt the sea and the sea-land side,
And then he'll be a true lover of mine.⁴⁴

The preceding types are alternating refrain. If the lines follow the couplet of textual material they are called end refrain. This is "The Twa Sisters" (Child 10):

O, sister, O, sister, come go with me,
Go with me down to the sea.
Jury flower gent the roseberry,
The jury hangs over the roseberry.⁴⁵

Just as a four-phrase tune calls for a two-lined end refrain, other kinds of tune may need a single line of refrain, or three lines, or a quatrain comparable to a chorus.⁴⁶ The use of all three melody-suggested devices--repetition, internal refrain, and end refrain--is characteristic of the Two Sisters form and is more simply exemplified in "Sir Lionel" (Child 18):

I went out a-hunting one day,
Dellum down, dillum,
I went out a-hunting one day,
And I found there where a wild boar lay,
Come a call, cut him down,
Quilly quo qua.⁴⁷

Essentially the complex Two Sisters structure consists of eight short phrases exactly as in Child's LOB variant. Its music may in some variants, however, cause the second line to become so short as dubiously to be classified as a separate line, as in Davis:

There lived an old Lord in the North Countree,
Bow down,
There lived an old Lord in the North Countree,
Bow down you bittern to me,
There lived an old Lord in the North Countree,
And he had daughters one, two, three.
If this be true, true love, my love,
My love, be true to me.⁴⁸

In conclusion a caution should be sounded against interpreting all material exactly repeated from stanza to stanza as tune-ordered refrain. Although the underlined portion of "Lord Randal" (Child 12) is common to other stanzas, the poetic structure is a unit unshaped by its melody:

Where have you been to, my dear son?
Where have you been to, my dear son?"
"Courting, mother, courting, mother. Make my bed warm,
For I'm sick at my heart and fain would lie down."⁴⁹

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44. Ibid., p. 1 (No. 1A).
45. Ibid., p. 26 (No. 5A).
46. These three arrangements are illustrated respectively by ibid., pp. 391 (65G), 305-06 (45B), and 291 (42A).
47. Ibid., p. 55 (No. 9C).
48. Op. cit., pp. 552-53 (No. 5A).
49. Davis, op. cit., p. 112 (No. 6G).

The same usage to a more pronounced extent appears in "The False Knight Upon the Road" (Child 3):

"Where are you going?" says the knight in the road.
"I'm a-going to my school," said the child as he stood.
He stood and he stood, He well thought on he stood.
"I'm a-going to my school," said the child as he stood.⁵⁰

And, most of all, in "The Maid Freed from the Gallows" (Child 95), in which repetitive stanzas consist of three quatrains, each and all except the underlined words is exactly repeated in succeeding stanzas:

Hangman, hangman, hold your rope,
 And hold it for awhile;
 I think I see my father coming
 From a long many mile.

Father, father, have you any gold?
Gold for to set me free?
 Or have you come to see me hung
 Beneath the gallows tree?

Son, O son, I have no gold,
Gold to set you free;
 I've only come to see you hung
 Beneath the gallows tree.⁵¹

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50. Sharp, English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians, p. 4 (No. 2B).
 51. Ibid., p. 210.
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OFFICIAL DIRECTORY OF
THE TENNESSEE FOLKLORE SOCIETY

Professor Clarence P. Snelgrove, Librarian, Tennessee Polytechnic Institute, Cookeville, Tennessee, has prepared this list of the official personnel of the Tennessee Folklore Society. It is printed here for the record and for the correction on any omissions which may have been made during the existence of the organization. Refer any suggestions to Professor Snelgrove or to the secretary.

FIRST ANNUAL MEETING, 1934
Tennessee Polytechnic Institute, Cookeville

President.....Charles S. Pendleton, Nashville
Vice-president.....
Secretary.....J. A. Rickard, Cookeville
Treasurer.....Mrs. Maude Terry, Cookeville

SECOND ANNUAL MEETING, NOVEMBER 9, 1935
Tennessee Polytechnic Institute, Cookeville

President.....Charles S. Pendleton, Nashville
Vice-president.....
Secretary.....T. J. Farr, Cookeville
Treasurer.....Mrs. Maude Terry, Cookeville

THIRD ANNUAL MEETING, NOVEMBER 14, 1936
Maryville College, Maryville

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Vice-presidents.....L.L. McDowell, Smithville
 E. G. Rogers, Carthage
 O. M. Fogle, Pleasant Hill
Secretary.....Edwin R. Hunter, Maryville
Treasurer.....Miss Geneva Anderson, Maryville

FOURTH ANNUAL MEETING, NOVEMBER 13, 1937
Pleasant Hill Academy, Pleasant Hill

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Vice-presidents..... L. L. McDowell, Smithville
 E. G. Rogers, Carthage
 O. M. Fogle, Pleasant Hill
Secretary..... Edwin R. Hunter, Maryville
Treasurer..... Miss Geneva Anderson, Maryville

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President..... L. L. McDowell, Smithville
Vice-presidents..... E. G. Rogers, Carthage
W. S. McClain, Cookeville
Harry L. Upperman, Baxter

* The secretary is also editor of the Bulletin.

Secretary Edwin R. Hunter, Maryville
Treasurer Miss Geneva Anderson, Maryville

SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING, NOVEMBER 4, 1939
Smith County High School, Carthage

President L. L. McDowell, Smithville
Vice-presidents Neal Frazier, Murfreesboro
Frieda Johnson, Nashville
Edwin C. Kirkland, Knoxville
Secretary Edwin R. Hunter, Maryville
Treasurer Miss Geneva Anderson, Maryville

SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING, NOVEMBER 9, 1940
Peabody College, Nashville

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Miss Maude Green, Whitehaven
Mrs. Hayden Young, Cookeville
Secretary Edwin R. Hunter, Maryville
Treasurer Miss Geneva Anderson, Maryville

EIGHTH ANNUAL MEETING, NOVEMBER 15, 1941
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Vice-presidents Neal Frazier, Murfreesboro
Dr. Susan B. Riley, Nashville
Paul M. Fink, Jonesboro
Secretary Dr. Edwin C. Kirkland, Knoxville
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NINTH ANNUAL MEETING, NOVEMBER 7, 1942
Tennessee Polytechnic Institute, Cookeville

President Dr. Susan B. Riley, Nashville
Vice-presidents Neal Frazier, Murfreesboro
Paul M. Fink, Jonesboro
Secretary Miss Dorothy Horne, Maryville
Treasurer Dr. T. J. Farr, Cookeville

TENTH ANNUAL MEETING, 1943

Tennessee Folklore Society did not hold an annual meeting in 1943.

ELEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING, OCTOBER 28, 1944
George Peabody College, Nashville

President Mrs. L. L. McDowell, Smithville
Vice-president
Secretary Miss Dorothy Horne, Maryville
Treasurer Dr. T. J. Farr, Cookeville

TWELFTH ANNUAL MEETING, NOVEMBER 3, 1945
Magness Memorial Library, McMinnville

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|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| President | Mrs. L. L. McDowell, Smithville |
| Vice-president | |
| Secretary | Miss Dorothy Horne, Maryville |
| Treasurer | Dr. T. J. Farr, Cookeville |

THIRTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING, NOVEMBER 2, 1946
Library, McMinnville High School, McMinnville

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| President | Mrs. L. L. McDowell, Smithville |
| Vice-president | Charles F. Bryan, McMinnville |
| Secretary | E. G. Rogers, Athens |
| Treasurer | T. J. Farr, Cookeville |

FOURTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING, NOVEMBER 1, 1947
Tennessee Polytechnic Institute, Cookeville

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
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| Vice-president | Charles F. Bryan, Nashville |
| Secretary | E. G. Rogers, Athens |
| Treasurer | T. J. Farr, Cookeville |

FIFTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING, NOVEMBER, 1948
George Peabody College, Nashville

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| President | Charles F. Bryan, Nashville |
| Vice-president | Miss Mary Barnicle, Knoxville |
| Secretary | E. G. Rogers, Athens |
| Treasurer | T. J. Farr, Cookeville |

SIXTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING, NOVEMBER 5, 1949
Tennessee Polytechnic Institute, Cookeville

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| President | Charles F. Bryan, Nashville |
| Vice-president | Miss Mary Barnicle, Knoxville |
| Secretary | E. G. Rogers, Athens |
| Treasurer | T. J. Farr, Cookeville |

SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING, NOVEMBER 4, 1950
Tennessee Polytechnic Institute, Cookeville

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| President | Miss Frieda Johnson, Nashville |
| Vice-president | Mr. George Boswell, Clarksville |
| Secretary | E. G. Rogers, Athens |
| Treasurer | Dr. T. J. Farr, Cookeville |

NOTES and ANNOUNCEMENTS

The November issue of The Peabody Reflector under the caption "Charles Bryan Wins Fresh Laurels" quotes from the Winston-Salem, N. C., Journal, as follows: "Recognized as the highest authority on folk music in the country, Charles Bryan is also an able instrumentalist and tenor, as well as composer and arranger of folk music In his programs at Mineral Springs he captivated the audiences by his warm, sympathetic, sincere, and richly melodic interpretations of many of the old folk ballads and songs which have been handed down through the generations in rural and highland America."

Mr. Bryan's folk cantata, "The Bell Witch," which had its premier in Carnegie Hall, New York, under the baton of Robert Shaw several years ago, was given in Nashville on December 13 and 14 by the Circle Players. Mr. Bryan is a member of the Peabody College Music faculty, and was president of the Tennessee Folklore Society for the two years 1948 and 1949.

The Peabody Reflector, November, 1950, issue, calls attention to the election of Miss Frieda Johnson, associate professor of English, as president of the Tennessee Folklore Society for 1951, in which article is mentioned the many years of invaluable service which Miss Johnson has given to the organization as vice-president, as a contributing member, and now as president.

Our exchange department is in receipt of Hoosier Folklore, A Quarterly of Folklore from Indiana and neighboring states. "The Folksinger's Defense", "Southern Illinois Tales and Beliefs," and "Arapaho Tales I" are the leading articles.

Anthropological Records 13:2 (Shaped Breechcloths from Peru) by Carolyn M. Osborne, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1950, is a recent item on our exchange list.

"Jesus Born in Bethlehem" is the title of a composition in sheet music with lyrics and music by Charles F. Bryan featured on the cover of the December, 1950, edition of The Peabody Reflector. Professor Bryan of the Department of Music, Peabody College for Teachers, was 1950 president of the Tennessee Folklore Society.

E.G. Rogers, secretary-editor of the Tennessee Folklore Society, gave a radio discussion on "Organization and Objectives of the Tennessee Folklore Society" over Station W L A R, Athens, on January 2.

Miss Frieda Johnson, president of the Tennessee Folklore Society and associate professor of English at Peabody, is on winter leave from the college and will be spending a portion of the time in Lovettsville, Virginia.

BOOK REVIEWS

Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology, and Legend, edited by Maria Leach (Two Volumes). Funk and Wagnalls Company, New York, 1949-1950, \$15.00.

Volume 1 of this Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology, and Legend was revived in the "Tennessee Folklore Society Bulletin," Volume XVI, Number 1, March, 1950, and announcement was made of Volume II of this monumental work which is now complete. Volume II is a continuation (J-Z) of the plan (A-I) of Volume I, with 33 additional articles including Jazz, Mnemonics, Oral Tradition in Music, Phallism, Primitive and Folk Art, Proverbs, Riddles, Types and Classification of Folklore. A coverage of many nationalities is attempted here.

This is an attractive and indispensable reference set for any public or private library or home — wherever there is interest in folk belief, superstition or symbolism. An exhaustive and interesting account can be found on any topic from shoes to shooting stars. Open these volumes at any page and you will find yourself exploring many another topic out of sheer enjoyment before laying the book aside. There are approximately fifty survey articles done by specialists in major fields of folklore interest and alphabetically placed along with other reference materials throughout the two volumes.

— E.G.R.

Lawrence Edwards, Speedwell Sketches, the Hamlet Press, Avon, Illinois, 1950.

Speedwell Sketches by Lawrence Edwards was rather lived than written into existence. Whether one might call these etchings essays, short stories, or drama — it matters but little — for these experiences rather tell themselves through the youthful observations of one who knows them well. At times, and in turn, the style can be any one of these, but always there is the unity of anecdote which reminds us that these are Speedwellians, those hardy tillers of the soil (who) were very much aware of themselves and their community. In this sense the style is suspiciously narrative. The author locates his village as "North of Norris Lake — in Tennessee. . . A rural expanse peopled by the off-spring of Scotch-Irish and German pioneers and trail-blazers who came to Powell Valley before Washington prayed at Valley Forge and dodged chunks of ice on the Delaware."

This little volume is deep-rooted in a pattern of culture which belongs to folklore. The language is often of pure Anglo-Saxon flavor, although it sounds very dialectic as we hear it used today. It deals with a period of language and culture fairly well preserved by the surrounding hills. The incidents are often humorous — always commonplace. The reader is amused when Russ has the Squire draw up the document for "swearing off" from his likker drinking for one year, but has the agreement "veoted" in a much shorter time. Uncle Jeems who "put his cud on a chip" when "the

grub was on the table" is made a lovable character, just a little "teched" at times. "My Dad made Big Tracks" is one of the best-done sketches, and portrays the influence of a parent in the upbringing of his son. The author's power of character delineation is revealed at its best in "The Barn-Builder." There are accounts of weddings, of community revival meetings, of hants and ghosts, of sweethearts and "parlor-dates," and a very telling description of "School Days." There was something about Speedwell both compelling and expelling as the youth's yearning for an education and his desire some day to ride "better and faster things." This is a book of significance both to folklore and for enjoyment.

— E.G.R.

Marie Campbell, A House With Stairs, Rhimehart & Company, Inc., New York, 1950, \$2.50.

A number of people who are not really proud of their Southern heritage should read Marie Campbell's A House With Stairs and then in their wavering disbelief start out to check the validity of the anecdotes of this story on race relations. Any one who does so with open mind will soon discover that he is less afflicted than he at first supposed with regionlistic prejudices.

It is a story of plantation life in Georgia just after the Civil war. It is the story of the life of the people who labored and loved, lived and died, "separate-together," as told by Janie, the little colored girl at Hickory Level. Janie and Celia, the little white girl, grew up together in spirit and in love for each other, and separated, only now and then, by color. Janie's black Mama held the plantation together through "Miss Charlotte's" sickness and death and until Mr. Forrest's return from the war, and then took care of the children and held their life of the plantation together until time for it to pass, through Miss Charlotte's will, into other hands. "Being friends," Mama always said, "is a binding thing, stronger than bondage. My own children I wanted to be what our people had never been before — free citizens who knew how to use their freedom for the best." This spiritual affinity and desire of social good is always exemplified in the regard and mutual companionship which the two little girls have across the color line for each other. And as they grow up, the love which looks to marital happiness can but reluctantly break the bonds which so long have bound them together. Miss Campbell's former books are Cloud Walking and Folks Do Get Born.

— E. G. R.

TENNESSEE FOLKLORE SOCIETY BULLETIN

Volume XVll, No. 1

March, 1951

Published four times a year
by the
TENNESSEE FOLKLORE SOCIETY

President, Miss Frieda Johnson, Peabody College for Teachers,
Nashville, Tennessee
Vice-President, George W. Boswell, Austin Peay State College,
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and includes a subscription to four issues of the Bulletin, the
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50¢. Subscriptions should be mailed to DR. T. J. Farr (see above),
and materials for publication to E. G. Rogers.
